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Long Hill Ledger Title

**The purpose of this newsletter is to provide parents with helpful parenting tips and useful resources.**

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How Extracurricular Activities Promote Resilience

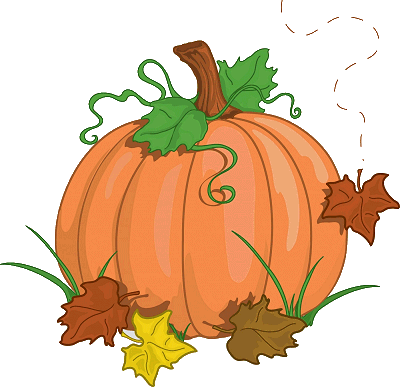
Although we do our best to focus on the positives in school, it is inevitable that all children will face challenges, setbacks, failures, and other difficulties throughout their school years. Teaching resilience in children will help them withstand the pressures of school more effectively. Resilience is the ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens. Resilience includes being able to deal effectively with pressure, and get through tough times with good outcomes. One great way to help children build resilience is to encourage their participation in extracurricular activities.

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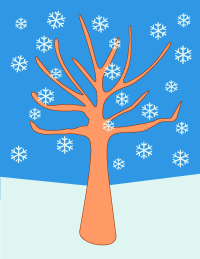
One of the best things for promoting resilience in children is instilling the belief that they are competent and have the ability to overcome challenges. This belief can be developed by joining extracurricular activities where children can discover and utilize their creativity, talents and skills. When children can identify and develop their strengths, their self-confidence will increase. They will begin to experience success, as well as learn to cope with challenges. They will learn responsibility and learn to be part of a team or group. They will become inspired, and also gain a sense that they have something to offer the world. By developing these newfound strengths and skills, your child will also build resilience.

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Finding the Right Extracurricular Activity For Your Child

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Extracurricular activities can include participation in clubs, student government, school band, church youth group, a sports team, martial arts, creative arts, etc. So, what makes a good extracurricular activity?These are several signs of a promising extracurricular program:

* *Your child should feel like they are a part of a group or something special.*
* *It should provide your child with the opportunity to develop relationships with adults and pro-social peers.*
* *The activity has well established goals, provides consistent structure, a predictable routine, and set of rules to follow.*
* *All participants of the activity are accountable to certain standards.*
* *The activity is appropriate for the age group. For example, having activities that are not too difficult for younger children or seem "uncool" for teenagers.*
* *The program involves parents and peers.*

Most importantly, though, extracurricular activities have to be fun and attractive to your child. Often the best judges of this are our children themselves, which is why it is important to allow them to experiment with new activities. There are so many great choices out there, and finding the activity that is right for your child can take some time, but in the end is worth it!

There are a number of benefits of extracurricular activities for your child, including building upon their social, problem solving, and leadership skills. Extracurricular activities provide your child with opportunities to learn about time management and learning how to prioritize. It assists in diversifying your child’s interests, and teaches the value of long term commitment. Extracurricular activities allow your child to make a contribution in some way, and to feel good about that contribution which assists in building self esteem.

Extracurricular activities provide natural, teachable moments for our children that coaches, parents, and leaders can take full advantage of. Research has shown that youth who participate in extracurricular activities are more likely to:

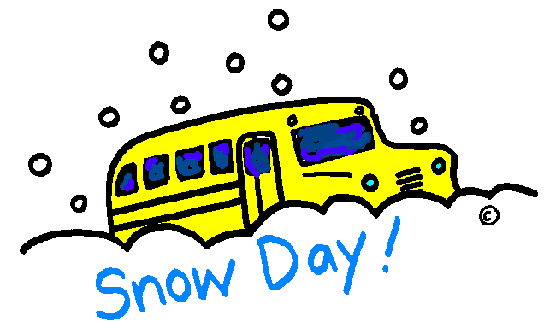
* *Have better grades (Marsh, 1992);*
* *Have higher standardized test scores (Gerber, 1996);*
* *Have higher educational attainment (Hanks & Eckland, 1976);*
* *Attend school more regularly (Mahoney & Cairns, 1997);*
* *Have higher self-concepts (Marsh, 1992).*

*Resources:* [*http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cy/other/fs9932.pdf*](http://www.unce.unr.edu/publications/files/cy/other/fs9932.pdf)

[*http://education.more4kids.info/168/extracurricular-school-activities/*](http://education.more4kids.info/168/extracurricular-school-activities/)

*http://www.kidspot.com*

Benefits of Extracurricular Activities

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**How do I find activities for my child to participate in?**

**Long Hill Township Public Library** has programs running from pre-school through high school

<http://longhilllibrary.org/home>

**Kids Guide** has many enjoyable activities to choose from! (i.e. arts, music, sports, recreation, camps, etc)

<http://www.kidsguidenj.com/sports/recfacilities.html>

**FORCE**- (Focusing Our Resources for Children’s Enrichment) provides after school programs, including sports, plays, and any activities associated with the arts. <http://www.longhillforce.org/faq.html>

**Things to do in Morris County**- has fun activities to do with your children, indoors and out!

<http://morristourism.org/things_to_do_with_kids.php>

Extracurricular Activities In Our Area